

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
for the
BOROUGH OF COCHRANTON

November, 1990

by

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NEW
DATE
NEEDED

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USEFUL FOR
GRANTS

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GEOLOGY STUDY MAY NOT
BE USEFUL FOR WRITING GRANTS

**COCHRANTON
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

BACKGROUND

PHYSIOLOGY

Land form has a direct impact upon development. Western Pennsylvania has been covered by glaciers at various times. As the glaciers retreated, they left a mixture of soils. Although these ice forms did grind down much of the pre-existing landscape - a favor to modern development - they also often left poorly drained clayey soils - a real development problem. As soils and slopes do not change appreciably with time, there is little need to go into great depth covering information described twenty years ago. Therefore, only a brief section on soils and slopes is included. For additional data, the 1972 Regional Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Area Plans for Water and Sanitary Sewers should be consulted. *IS THERE A MORE RECENT STUDY*

Soils: According to the Soil Survey for Crawford County, numerous soil types can be found in Cochranton. Primary varieties include Braceville, Pope, Chenango, Haven, and Red Hook. Of these, Braceville, Pope, and Chenango predominate. These soils are described as deep and moderately to excessively well-drained soils. The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) comments that many of these soil types are associated with floodplains or are found near major streams.

Obviously, such a description is apt for Cochranton. Although the Borough has a water system for over ninety years, it is not sewered. This community is rather densely populated, but is not under state mandate to construct a waste water treatment facility. Undoubtedly, the deep, well-drained and often gravelly soils found here allow the existing on-site sanitary sewer facilities to handle their effluent quickly. *DELETE*

In fact, the Department of Environmental Resources recently completed a survey of the Borough specifically to find evidence of malfunctioning on-lot septic systems. They did not find such evidence. Consequently, the Borough can still rely, at least in the short term, on its installed individual sewage systems. *DELETE*

Slope: Although a great deal of Cochranton is composed of nearly flat sectors, there are some locations where considerable slope is present. A quick glance at the soils map for the Area shows scattered "C" (8-15%) and "D" (15-25%) slopes. According to the 1972 Comprehensive Plan, approximately 20% of the Borough has slopes of 9% or more. Normally, slopes over 8% present development difficulties, while those with slopes in excess of 15% are rarely developed. Most of the more severe slopes are encountered in lightly or non-developed areas along Route 322, North Street, Route

SEWER SYSTEM BUILT PER
EPA MANDATE

173 (Cemetery Hill), and in the extreme southeast section of Cochrannton. These slope considerations have encouraged development parallel to Franklin Street and French Creek. This historic pattern is apt to continue. The steep slope lands are unlikely to develop except where acute economic pressure is felt.

Floodplains: On June 4, 1990, the Federal Emergency Management Agency published a Flood Insurance Study for Cochrannton. This Study covered French Creek and Little Sugar Creek within the Borough's borders. According to the Study, the upstream drainage area for French Creek is 990 square miles, of which 53 is contributed by Little Sugar Creek. There are two flood control structures upstream from the Borough which help control flooding; one in Erie County, the Union City Reservoir; the other in Crawford County, Woodcock Creek Lake. Previous floods of record included January of 1959, March 1913, April 1947, March 1960, and March 1964.

From a planning standpoint, the Study results are of importance. Traditionally, the top of the railroad tracks was the flood limit. In Cochrannton, the tracks follow French Creek; but in most cases, do not set the flood hazard area. The flood hazard area spills over into areas near Franklin in the south of the Borough. It includes much of the land the 1972 Plan proposed to use to construct the "missing links" of South Smith and South Atlantic Streets. Near the confluence with Little Sugar Creek, it includes the Fair Grounds, as well as a significant portion of the school/ ballfield complex to the north of the Little Sugar Creek.

On Little Sugar Creek itself, the flood areas are shown on both sides of the stream and include a large portion of relatively flat undeveloped land off North Street.

Perhaps the greatest impact of the Flood Study results are to limit the development options of the Borough in future years.

FLOODPLAINS STUDY USEFUL
FOR WRITING GRANTS

EXISTING LAND USE

The primary purpose of the land use section of a comprehensive plan is to describe the existing land use patterns which exist in a community and to recommend policies for future development. For Pennsylvania communities, these land use recommendations normally are translated into specific land use controls typically centering around zoning. *WE DON'T HAVE ZONING*

For Cochranton, it is possible to view the land use patterns with some sense of the history of development. In the 1972 Cochranton Regional Comprehensive Plan, a land use survey was completed. This survey contained two tables. *SEE 1989 LAND USE SURVEY*

The initial analysis was along general land use categories, while the second looked at developed land only. The results were as follows:

TABLE 1
COCHRANTON BOROUGH
GENERAL LAND USE - 1972

<u>Category</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Developed	309.7	38.8
Agriculture	113.5	14.2
Open	143.7	18.0
Wooded	201.1	25.0
Marshlands	-0-	-0-
Water Bodies	<u>29.3</u>	<u>3.8</u>
Total	797.3	100.0

Source: 1972 Cochranton Regional Comprehensive Plan, Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.

IS THIS NEEDED
FOR WRITING A GRANT?

would be credited to residential uses. Such practice will slightly overstate residential land use categories. Conversely, the assessment map system is more restrictive and may even slightly understate residential uses.

One final difference should be noted; and it, at times, is a major one. In 1972, land use designations were made upon the developed portion of the land. For example, if a school sat on a 5-acre lot and only half the lot was actually developed, then 2-1/2 acres would be classified as public service and 2-1/2 acres as open. In 1989, while that approach was used with privately owned land, it was not used for the public/semi-public category. Historically, it is quite rare to see portions of vacant school or public land converted to private use. With these caveats in mind, we can now look at the 1989 figures.

TABLE 3
LAND USE SURVEY
COCHRANTON BOROUGH - 1989

<u>Category</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>(1972)</u>
Residential	158.04	20.9	188.9
Single Family	155.27	20.3	
Multi-Family	2.6	0.6	
Commercial	15.274	2.02	16.7
Industrial	13.27	1.73	7.7
Public/Semi-Public	96.27	12.73	22.1
Streets	45.40	6.00	74.3**
Railroads	19.63	2.60	
Undeveloped*	<u>408.40</u>	<u>54.02</u>	
Total	756.11	100.00	

*Vacant, Water, Agriculture

**Combined with railroads - 1989 combined is 65.03

Source: Field Survey, 1989

IS THIS NEEDED FOR WRITING A GRANT?

When comparing the 1972 to 1989 land use figures, it would appear that there was a shrinkage of residential land (188.9 - 158.04 = 30.86 or 16%). True, there appears to be a few conversions to commercial along Franklin, yet in Oakland Estates alone, perhaps 15-20 new housing units were added. Furthermore, this land use survey revealed no massive demolition sites. Consequently, any real changes have been modest and incremental - the difference of measuring techniques only.

Regardless of the type of measurement and the difference between old and new, the predominant land use for developed land within Cochranton Borough is residential. In the most part, this

2. Much of the undeveloped land is steep slope or floodplain.
3. Developed land represents the very great majority of property with road access, public water, and physical characteristics which lends itself to easy development.
4. Barring dramatic economic shifts, future new development will probably center on single-family residences.
5. The typical American household is shrinking in size. Consequently, housing demand per population unit is rising. At the same time, the local population is aging. The events will likely lead to increased demand towards the conversion of larger one-family dwellings to two- or three-family units. Such activity will likely be felt in the central part of Cochranon. *ADAMS PLACE, APARTMENTS*
6. Unless some dramatic shifts occur, the Cochranon commercial area will likely remain rooted in convenience goods stores with few, if any, comparison goods outlets. *NEED MORE STORES*
7. Industrial uses are scattered with little, or limited, clear land available for expansion.
8. There is an obvious lack of development standards for the Borough. *SHOULD WE HAVE ZONING, INCREASED GUIDELINES REGARDING NEW CONSTRUCTION ??*

HAVE NOT MOST OF THESE
PROBLEMS BEEN FIXED SINCE
THIS REPORT?

quite serious and are mandated actions under the federal and state legislation. Principal concerns are the two uncovered storage tanks and the level of residual chlorine.

These two problems appear to be related. With uncovered tanks, sunlight and other environmental forces dissipate the chlorine in the finished water. Furthermore, the use of open tanks is contrary to the Pure Drinking Water Act; and that condition must be corrected. In addition to being open, these tanks are old; and they operate inefficiently.

Another water concern is the well field on Steen Hill. This field has a capacity of 50,000 to 60,000 gallons per day in dry weather; an excellent backup to existing wells. However, water quality remains in question.

Although the replacement of water distribution lines has been a past priority, the problem is a pervasive one. The line condition is exacerbated by a number of deadends which encourage sedimentation and corrosion. Certainly, steel pipe, especially subject to corrosion, is one of its many weak links in the system. Due to line age and corrosion, there is some concern that upgrades to this system, of improved volume and pressure of water, may rupture weaker lines. That concern has been translated into an ambitious improvement program recently funded by PENNVEST. Ironically, even the recent increase in water chlorination, per DER orders, has had a bad effect. The excess chlorine in the system is causing the loosening of mineral deposits in pipes. Consequently, delivered finished water may have a poor taste along with an unpalatable odor.

A final problem of the water system is the hydrants. A recent report relates to many of the Borough's hydrants work improperly. Due to their age, replacement parts for these hydrants are not available.

In general, Cochranon Borough has a very serious situation relative to water.

All sewerage for the Borough is through individual, on-lot septic tanks. In 1989-1990, PADER sanitarians made an inspection of these systems. Their findings were overwhelmingly favorable. Yet, for the purpose of long-range planning, the need of a central sanitary sewer system must be addressed.

Gas and electric within the Borough seem to be satisfactory, and we learn of no criticism of these utilities. Likewise, the telephone company appears to have adequate service for the needs of the Borough user currently and for the immediate future. Consequently, no comments relative to the level of service of the private utilities need be made.

IS THIS NEEDED FOR
WRITING A GRANT?

Street (a southerly extension) and West Street, an extension from the Fairgrounds across Little Sugar Creek to the new Third Street extension. Also, a brand new road off Third (north of Franklin) was recommended to access the large vacant area between Sugar Creek and North Street.

Another source of possible future road programs is the PennDOT 12 Year Plan. This is a listing of proposed road projects throughout the Commonwealth based upon three (3), four-year increments. Normally, projects in the first four-year segment are on some type of firm construction schedule, while proposals in the second four-year term are "planned," with the third four-year proposal considered tenuous.

There are no major projects currently on the State's "12 Year Plan" for Cochranon Borough. In the past, projects on Route 322 and Route 173 were listed, as well as a Franklin Street Bridge and the North Street sight alignment correction. They have since been dropped.

Another PennDOT programming device is the maintenance program. Although short term in scope, it can often involve significant reconstruction and rehabilitation work. One important element of that element is the "3R" Program. On the PennDOT "3R" Program, Route 322, from Cochranon north, is being restored. This work involves drainage, shoulders, and repaving. The Cochranon south segment is planned for future years.

Cochranon is somewhat unique, as rail service is still available. A Conrail branch line connects the Oil City-Franklin-Titusville area to its main line in Meadville. The branch line runs through the Borough, generally along French Creek. Given the activity at the Pennzoil Refinery in Oil City, the rails should remain in use for the foreseeable future. No local active use outside of scrap storage is noted for the railroad.

STREETS NEVER BUILT IN BORO
IS THIS ROADWORK STUFF
RELEVANT TO GRANTS?

POPULATION

Population characteristics and projections are essential in developing an effective comprehensive plan. Therefore, a prime section of the Borough's Plan will be based on statistical information derived from various population studies.

According to the last population count taken, the 1980 U.S. Census, the Borough of Cochranon numbered 1,240 persons. This figure is projected to remain relatively constant for approximately the next ten years unless job opportunities in the area increase (see Table 4). This low rate of growth (1%) is consistent with projections for the State of Pennsylvania and Crawford County.

IS OUR POPULATION SMALLER??

TABLE 4
U.S. CENSUS POPULATION PROJECTIONS
1980-2000

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990*</u>	<u>1995*</u>	<u>2000*</u>
Pennsylvania	11,863,895	12,018,816	12,100,149	12,101,253
Crawford County	88,869	90,427	91,025	91,196
Cochranon	1,240	1,262	1,270	1,272

*Projected

Source: Pennsylvania Data Center

A July 1988 population estimate from CENDATA, the U.S. Bureau's on-line computer service (Table 5), shows Pennsylvania's population increasing 1.2% from 1980. On the county and local level, however, the data is somewhat less optimistic. CENDATA estimates a 3.3% decrease in population for Crawford County and an alarming 8.5% decrease for the Borough of Cochranon. However, this data is often less accurate at the local level than at the County level. This is due to the fact that the prime estimates are based upon county, not local, population.

TABLE 6
COHORT ANALYSIS

	<u>PA</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Crawford County</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Coch- ranton</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>% Females</u>
0-4	747,458	6.3	6,310	7.1	76	6.1	54
5-9	805,151	6.8	6,996	7.8	95	7.7	52
10-14	931,891	7.9	7,628	8.6	104	8.4	49
15-19	1,080,610	9.1	8,376	9.4	108	8.7	48
20-24	1,059,815	8.9	7,405	8.3	76	6.1	47
25-29	945,051	8.0	6,611	7.4	97	7.8	52
30-34	847,847	7.1	6,437	7.2	69	5.6	52
35-44	1,274,072	10.1	9,610	10.8	146	11.8	51
45-54	1,296,012	10.9	8,816	9.9	121	9.8	54
55-59	712,074	6.0	4,735	5.3	76	6.1	65
60-64	632,981	5.3	4,464	5.1	48	3.9	48
65-74	944,065	8.0	6,871	7.7	134	10.8	59
75-84	456,908	3.9	3,419	3.8	66	5.3	65
85+	129,960	1.1	1,191	1.3	24	1.9	67
TOTAL	11,863,895	100.0	88,869	100.0	1,240	100.0	53

Source: Pennsylvania Data Center (1980 U.S. Census Bureau)

With the exception of the 45-54 and 60-64 cohorts, Table 6 indicates a higher percentage of people in each age cohort over the age of 35 in Cochranon than in both Crawford County and Pennsylvania. This is reflected in the mean age of Cochranon (34.6), (Table 8) which is 2.5 and 3.7 years higher than both the State of Pennsylvania and Crawford County respectfully. Within Cochranon, the mean age of females is 37.2 as compared to 31.8 for males. This significant difference in mean age by sex can be related indirectly to the number of people widowed. There were 49 widowed females and only 13 widowed men in the Borough of Cochranon per the 1980 Census.

TABLE 7
AGE COHORT DIVISIONS

<u>Percentage Over</u>	<u>Pennsylvania</u>	<u>Crawford</u>	<u>Cochranon</u>
35	45.9%	44.0%	49.6%
45	35.2%	33.25	37.8%
55	24.2%	23.2	28.0%
65	13.0%	12.8%	18.1%

Source: Pennsylvania Data Center (1980 U.S. Census Bureau)

OLD STATISTICS. ANY VALUE FOR
GETTING GRANTS FOR SENIOR CITIZEN
HOUSING??

OLD STATISTICS

TABLE 9
PROFILE OF 1980 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS
COCHRANTON

Population: 1,240
Sex of Persons: 582 males, 658 females
Mean Age: 34.6 - 31.8 males, 37.2 females
Number of Households: 469
Number of Families: 349
Average Household Size: 2.64
Households with Children:

Total - 350
Married Couples - 308
Male Households, No Wife - 11
Female Households, No Husband - 30
Non-Family Households - 1

One-Person Households:

Total - 119
Male - 24
Female - 95

Persons by Race: 1,238 while, 1 American Indian, 1 Asian Indian
Marital Status of Persons 15+:

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Single	107	88
Married (Except Separated)	313	313
Separated	3	4
Widowed	13	94
Divorced	<u>12</u>	<u>18</u>
Total	448	517

Source: Pennsylvania Data Center (1980 Census)

As the table notes, about one in three area workers were involved in durable goods manufacturing in 1980. This is much higher than the national average, showing the Region's traditional link to industry.

As all area residents know, manufacturing experienced some severe setbacks in the early 1980's. Unemployment rose to the highest levels seen since the Great Depression. Crawford County suffered, as did all of Western Pennsylvania. However, by 1988, recovery was evident. Table 11 illustrates unemployment for Crawford County (Meadville Labor Market Area) from 1988-1990.

TABLE 11
UNEMPLOYMENT FOR CRAWFORD COUNTY
1988-1990

	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>Feb. 1990</u>
Rate	8.0	6.8	5.8	6.8

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor, Bureau of Research and Statistics

One of the most notable, and from current information, most durable changes to Crawford County in the 1980's was a restructuring of regional economics. In general, total manufacturing employment declined. Total service sector employment (Retail Trade, Personal Services) rose. However, manufacturing remains proportionally higher in the region than in the nation as a whole.

AGAIN, OLD STATISTICS
ARE THEY RELEVANT FOR
ANY GRANTS?

NOT RELEVANT

TABLE 12
LARGEST EMPLOYERS BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
CRAWFORD COUNTY - 1986

	<u>SIC Code</u>	<u>Name</u>
University	8221	Allegheny College
Hospital	8062	Meadville Medical Center
Steel Mill	3312	Cytems Specialty Steel
Glass Products	3211	PPG Industries
Amusement Park	7996	Conneaut Lake Park
Hand Tool Manufacturer	3423	Channelock
Fastener Manufacturer	3964	Talon, Inc.
Hospital	8062	Titusville Hospital
Nursing Home	8651	Wesbury United Methodist Community
Nursing Home	8651	Beverly Enterprises

Source: Pennsylvania Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1986

As the table notes, six of the ten top employers are non-manufacturing entities, showing a growing importance of services in the regional economy, but the retention of manufacturing as a viable enterprise in the County.

The ten most common occupations in Crawford County that year also reveal something about changing economic patterns.

TABLE 13
MOST COMMON (POPULOUS) OCCUPATIONS
CRAWFORD COUNTY - 1980

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
1. Teachers (Secondary and Post)	1,740
2. Secretaries/Receptionists	1,411
3. Janitors and Cleaners	960
4. Production Supervisors	834
5. Farmers (except Horticulture/Nursery)	778
6. Truck Drivers, Heavy	741
7. Laborers, Exc. Construction	736
8. Nurses Aides/Orderlies	704
9. Grinding, Abrading, Buffing Machinists	628
10. Registered Nurses	598
Total	9,130

Source: Pennsylvania Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1986

Crawford County lies at the southeastern border of what is commonly referred to as the Great Lakes Dairy Belt. In 1987, there were 554 farmers with dairy herds. Total inventory of milk cows was 19,968, or an average of 36 per farm. This placed the County fourth in the State's 67 counties for farms with dairy herds. The County also had a high number of farms with inventories of beef cattle and moderate inventories of hogs. Four hundred and ninety-two dairy farms were engaged in sale of milk products in 1987. Total sales were estimated at nearly thirty million dollars. Few crops were grown for direct human consumption, feed grains and silage crops leading County crops. Average size of farm was 185 acres (including both owned, rented and leased land). The largest single number of farms, had 100-134 acres. This is typical for dairy operations and eastern livestock operators. In total, about 36% of the County land area is occupied by farms, about ten percentage points above the State average.

During the 1980's, the number of farms declined sharply in Crawford County (nearly 20%). This should have had some negative effect on the local retail and service economy but may have been offset in the long term by residential growth in rural areas.

Work Place: Most of the people from the Cochranon region do not work within the Borough itself. Although not a complete "bedroom community," certainly, it is somewhat the case with Cochranon. Homes are in the Borough, but jobs are not. One-third of the workforce drives 20-29 minutes to reach their work place.

TABLE 15
TRAVEL TIME TO WORK
COCHRANTON, PA - 1980

<u>Time</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
-5 Minutes	47	10%
5-9 Minutes	115	25%
10-14 Minutes	52	11%
15-19 Minutes	50	11%
20-29 Minutes	153	33%
30-44 Minutes	33	7%
45-59 Minutes	0	0%
60+ Minutes	<u>11</u>	<u>3%</u>
Total	461	100%

Source: Census of 1980

In conclusion, the Cochranon Area serves as a residential base for the Meadville labor force, and as one of the centers of agriculture in Crawford County. Most borough businesses exist as a primary

NEW LIBRARY, NEW HOURS,
NEW MANAGEMENT

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Cochranton Area Public Library: Located at 107 Pine Street, the Cochranton Area Public Library is situated in an old converted army structure of WWII vintage. Regardless of its age, the building is kept in good repair and has undergone recent remodeling.

The function of this facility is a community library, serving the entire Cochranton Area with a collection of over 10,000 volumes. The Library has a six-day-a-week schedule. In total, this facility is open thirty-two hours weekly, balancing morning and afternoon times to provide everyone with an opportunity to visit the establishment. Staff is provided by two paid persons and ten volunteers. A variety of activities are offered which affords Cochranton residents with services not often found in smaller communities.

In addition to its traditional role, the Library also provides a meeting place for various community organizations. The Saddle Club, Heritage Society, and similar groups meet here. However, due to the limited size of its meeting rooms, larger organizations cannot be accommodated.

Cochranton Volunteer Fire Company: Similar to the Library, the Fire Company is intended to serve the area, not just the Borough proper. Fire officials estimate their service area at some 3,100 families, about 8,500 persons. ??

The Fire Hall is located next to the Borough Building on Adams Street. This is a modern masonry structure, with a recent addition to house a kitchen. Equipment at the Department consists of an engine, pumper, one tanker, a "brush" truck, squad truck, two ambulances, and a SCUBA boat.

Police Services: Unlike the Fire Department, police services are normally limited to the Borough. Police staff is currently made up of one chief, one full-time officer, and two part-time patrolmen. There is also an auxiliary police staff of three officers, who do not normally work, but are available during a specific emergency. Recently, as part of a Drug Task Force Agreement, arrangement was made for Borough officials to make drug arrests beyond the Borough limits. Major equipment includes a patrol car and radio equipment. The Department is headquartered in the Borough Office. ??

Recreation: The Borough of Cochranton is fortunate to have within its borders a wide variety of recreational opportunities.

Located to the rear of the Borough Building and Fire Hall is the Lion's Community Park, dedicated to Marshal "Doc" Runkel. This is a multi-purpose family-oriented park, with a sliding board, various swing sets (2), see saw, picnic pavilions (2), tennis courts (2),

2 PART-TIME

→ PART OF NEW BORO BUILDING

HOUSING

No other aspect of a community is as important to its residents as the housing stock. Even the busiest person spends nearly half his or her time at home. Equally as important, is the impression a community makes upon visitors. Typically, the type and quality of its homes are the primary points which set the physical attractiveness of a community.

OLD FIGURES

According to the 1980 Census, there were 501 housing units in Cochranon Borough. A housing unit, as conceived by the Census Bureau, can be anything from an entire house to a single room, as long as it is intended as separate living quarters.

The major housing characteristic from the 1980 Census of Housing is summarized in the following paragraphs.

ACCURATE ??

General: Of the 501 housing units, 498 (99%) were considered year-round; and of these, only 29 (5.81%) were vacant. The average number of rooms was 5.8. In Cochranon, the vast majority of units, 368 (74%), were single-family detached dwellings. Seventy-seven units were duplexes, 50 units in multi-family dwellings. At the time of the 1980 Census, only three mobile homes were counted.

Age: One of the key elements of devising a housing strategy is the age of the housing stock. Older homes need more maintenance, modernization, and are more subject to conversion into multi-family dwellings. According to Census data, 297 (60%) of all Borough housing stock was constructed prior to 1939. Between 1970 and 1980, only 42 (8%) units were added. Consequently, the majority of homes in Cochranon are more than 50 years old.

ACCURATE J.??

Tenure: Traditionally, small urban places in Western Pennsylvania have high ratios of home ownership. Cochranon is no exception. Once more, using the 1980 Census, we see 343 of the occupied units, or 73% of all single-family homes, are owner-occupied, while only 27% were renters. This is a home-ownership rate of about 7% higher than that of Crawford County.

OLD FIGURES

Value: The estimated home values and rental costs of Census reports are given by the housing unit occupant and are not professional estimates. Nonetheless, as they are done universally, the same comparative information can be derived. The Census of Housing 1980 reports a median home value (owner-occupied) at \$33,200 in the Borough, with median rents at \$127. Respective values in the County were \$34,300 and \$140.

Miscellaneous: Just a few more items will complete our analysis of 1980 Census data. At that time, the County report showed 16.65 of all housing units were one-person households, with nearly 24% of all Cochranon units in that category. Finally, the Census Bureau

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

What will the future hold for Cochrannton? If this question could be answered with any exacting confidence, this document would be a prophetic one rather than a planning one. Unfortunately, such is not the case. Anyone reading the original Plan will realize that projections and forecasts, no matter how well substantiated, are often simply wrong. This problem evolves into the need for periodic comprehensive plan updates. Thus, the purpose of the following narrative is to analyze the 1972 Comprehensive Plan in the light of all that has happened since. Upon this analysis, the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Plan will be altered, re-oriented, or carried over, as necessary.

In 1972, the citizens of the Region had several major concerns for the future. They were:

1. The effect of newly constructed I-79 upon the local area.
2. The decentralization of Crawford County's population.
3. The potential for outdoor recreation in the Area.

In retrospect, the effect of any of these agents was considerably less than anticipated at the time. While there has been some commercial development near the Cochrannton interchange, it has had little effect on the Borough.

Concerning Element 2, Cochrannton has benefitted from some of the decentralization of Meadville's population. In fact, as illustrated by the section on population, the last decade has brought the Borough proper, a population loss. Over time then, even small central places like Cochrannton have seen the effect of population decentralization. Cochrannton may also simply be a part of a trend which has beset the northwest quadrant of Pennsylvania. Simply put, Crawford County and many neighboring counties are losing population.

Element 3 may still have potential, but it has to this point not been realized. Outdoor recreation opportunities abound to the east, north, and south of the Cochrannton Region; but with the exception of some seasonal housing, and a Pennsylvania Fish Commission access point, tourism has been negligible.

Pages 7 to 10 of the 1972 Plan have more objectives for Cochrannton. Also, specific recommendations can be found in the functional categories of that Plan. Many of these are set forth within the background report of the edition of the Comprehensive Plan. In the balance of this report, we will not continuously re-visit the 1972 Plan but emphasize currently perceived needs.

**COCHRANTON BOROUGH
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

According to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, a Comprehensive Plan must consider the elements set forth in Section 301 of that legislation. The balance of this document will deal with these elements and make specific recommendations for the Borough of Cochranton to follow now, and in the future.

A Comprehensive Plan should have a "mission statement," a premise which provides a communal philosophy underlying its specific recommendations. Cochranton's Statement of Community Development Objectives is set forth below:

- a. To lessen congestion in the streets. ??
- b. To secure safety from fire and other dangers. ??
- c. To provide adequate light and air.
- d. To prevent the overcrowding of the land and to avoid undue concentration of population. NO PROBLEM
- e. To facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements, as well as the conservation of the value of land and buildings.
- f. To protect the existing residential development within the Borough, as well as to provide for new residential opportunities of different types and densities.
- g. To provide adequate space for existing and new commercial enterprises in Cochranton. SPACE EXISTS

These are made with reasonable consideration of other concerns, the existing character of the various areas within the Borough and their respective suitability for particular uses.

To provide for more specific guidance relative to the relationship of the community and the Comprehensive Plan, certain elements are set forth in the following paragraphs.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN:

In the past decade, there has been virtually no population growth within the Borough. In fact, both preliminary census counts and demographic forecasting has indicated a marginal decline. These facts undoubtedly will affect future land use considerations, especially in the residential and commercial categories. These two

categories are quite sensitive to, and are very much driven by, population levels.

The population section of this report sets forth the detail of Cochran's demographics. From those facts, the following can be deduced:

1. Overall population count should remain relatively static.
2. The composition of the population will continue to change with:
 - an aging population
 - more one-person households (especially among the elderly)

The above conclusions should point to a modest demand for additional housing, especially units aimed towards the elderly and the small family. As a result, the need for residential land will continue; some classified as higher than normal densities.

Conversely, demand for traditional commercial will likely decrease. Some transition of existing commercial uses to more secondary ones or other use types (likely residential) can be projected.

Even though population forecasts do not indicate a great demand for new traditional single-family dwellings, some activity in this arena can be expected. This expectation is based upon subjective considerations. Such considerations include the fact that Cochran is a pleasant place to live and a good place to raise a family, removed from some of the more noxious urban problems.

To accommodate this future growth, the Future Land Use Plan and proposed Zoning Ordinance have been developed. The Future Land Use Plan is reflected in the Comprehensive Plan Recommendations of this report. The proposed Zoning Map is contained in the draft Zoning Ordinance prepared as a companion piece to this document. Frankly, these Plans suggest little change to existing established land use patterns.

The two challenges to the Borough are to preserve the excellent quality of life which currently exists and to accommodate new growth in a sensible and responsible manner. The proposed Zoning Ordinance has been structured to accomplish much of both aims. It sets forth land use districts, density, bulk, and yard regulations that are appropriate for the Cochran community. Furthermore, it addresses some of the basic questions relative to housing conversions which need to be considered (see also Housing Plan).

The shortcoming of the zoning approach however, is that it cannot address the infrastructure requirements any new development may bring. It is the recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan that, while the Zoning Ordinance be considered immediately, consideration

Construction specifications per the Borough Engineer's written recommendations and PennDOT's "Form 408."

In addition, the Borough should require that any development involving new streets provide for adequate storm drainage. Such storm drainage facilities should meet all applicable local, county, and state regulations.

The above recommendations, zoning and subdivision controls, are essential for Cochranon if it is to provide for future land development within its confines.

HOUSING PLAN:

The housing stock within Cochranon Borough is primarily composed of single-family dwellings, most of which were constructed more than fifty years ago. There are no codes or other standards which the Borough has adopted to insure new building or the conversion of existing homes into multi-unit structures are constructed in a structurally sound and safe manner. To preserve and protect the Borough's housing stock, the following steps are suggested:

1. Codes and Standards: The Rehabilitation Program listed below requires the use of minimum HUD standards. The Borough should explore overall standards to be applied uniformly throughout its jurisdiction. There are several options that might be explored. For example, the Council of American Building Officials (CABO) has published a One and Two Family Dwelling Code. This may be an excellent place to start.

In addition to the guidelines for one and two-family dwellings, there are several other construction codes produced by a variety of organizations which may be considered. These standards provide for residential construction, commercial construction, and cover plumbing, electrical, in addition to structural and mechanical aspects. If the Borough proceeds to consider these options, it must be recognized that adequate administration is required. Therefore, it may be wise to consult with larger municipalities within Crawford County to see if these types of services are available on a contract basis.

It must be noted that such a program need not cost the taxpayers of Cochranon, for code programs should be self-sustaining through a reasonable fee structure.

2. Rehabilitation Program: The Borough currently has a "rehab" program operated with services provided by the Meadville Redevelopment Authority. Under the current effort, approximately ten homes will be completed. Though the demand for this program has been less than anticipated, it is recommended that it be continued.

DON'T WE HAVE
CONSTRUCTION CODES?

recreational outlets. The only problem spot in the existing recreation inventory is the Fish Access Area off the Adams Street Bridge at French Creek. — *NEW FACILITY*

In fact, the Borough is quite fortunate as many of its recreational resources are maintained or operated by other organizations. Often smaller municipalities have developed larger resources than they are capable of sustaining as budgets shrink. The following recommendations are made relative to the Borough's recreational needs:

1. The current level of support (financial and legal) be continued.
2. The Borough develop a working committee of local recreational organizations who may desire to engage in capital projects over the next five years. If the Borough will be requested to contribute either directly or through grant sponsorship (RIRA, etc.), the following guidelines are suggested:
 - Require project budgets be defined, then a five-year priority list established.
 - Post developmental maintenance and operational cost must be defined for all proposals, and only projects which can be accommodated with affordable maintenance program efforts should be supported.
3. To date, recreational efforts have focused towards younger persons. Yet in 1980, nearly 50% of all residents were 35 years or older; and in 1990, this figure is likely to be much higher. Efforts to define and quantify the recreational needs of these citizens should be addressed. Again, the Borough's recreation committee should be used to consider the unmet needs in this sector. For example, a walking path along Little Sugar Creek. Needless to say, the same budgetary caveats mentioned in item 2 will also apply to any recommendations.

CARE COMMITTEE

COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN:

The Borough Building, the police station, and garage are all housed in a structure on Adams Street. It is an older building and not well suited for its usage. One of its primary drawbacks is a lack of access for the handicapped. On the positive side, the building is centrally located near the Borough's main traffic intersection. The Borough intends to construct a 28' x 40' salt storage building in the near future. That structure will be located to the rear of the Borough Building in lightly used parking area.

In the upcoming few years, the Borough may find a need for more office space, as demands for water, and possibly sewer,

Priority 1: Replacement of the traffic light at Franklin and Adams - This intersection is the only one in the Borough with a full-time four-way light. Unfortunately, though the signal is adequate for its needs, it is quite dated; and replacement parts are often impossible to find. Therefore, it will be necessary to replace this signal with a modern one.

It is suggested the Borough examine two possibilities relative to this problem. The most obvious approach is to have a safety analysis done of the intersection. If the volume of traffic and the number of accidents warrant it, it is possible the signal could be added to the PennDOT 12-Year Program as a safety project. This would insure that the great percentage of project funding would be provided by the federal and state governments. However, the Borough must be aware that it will have a rather complicated signal system and would be responsible for its maintenance.

An alternative would be to find an older used traffic signal from any number of local communities that have been converting their traditional single signal head to the multi-lane variety required under current standards. In the last analysis, the latter approach may, in fact, be wiser and more frugal if PennDOT would approve.

Priority 2: The configuration of the North Franklin Street Bridge creates a very difficult site situation for motorists entering Franklin from North Street. There is no easy solution to this problem; yet, it remains a hazard to the residents and motorists using Franklin Street in the Borough.

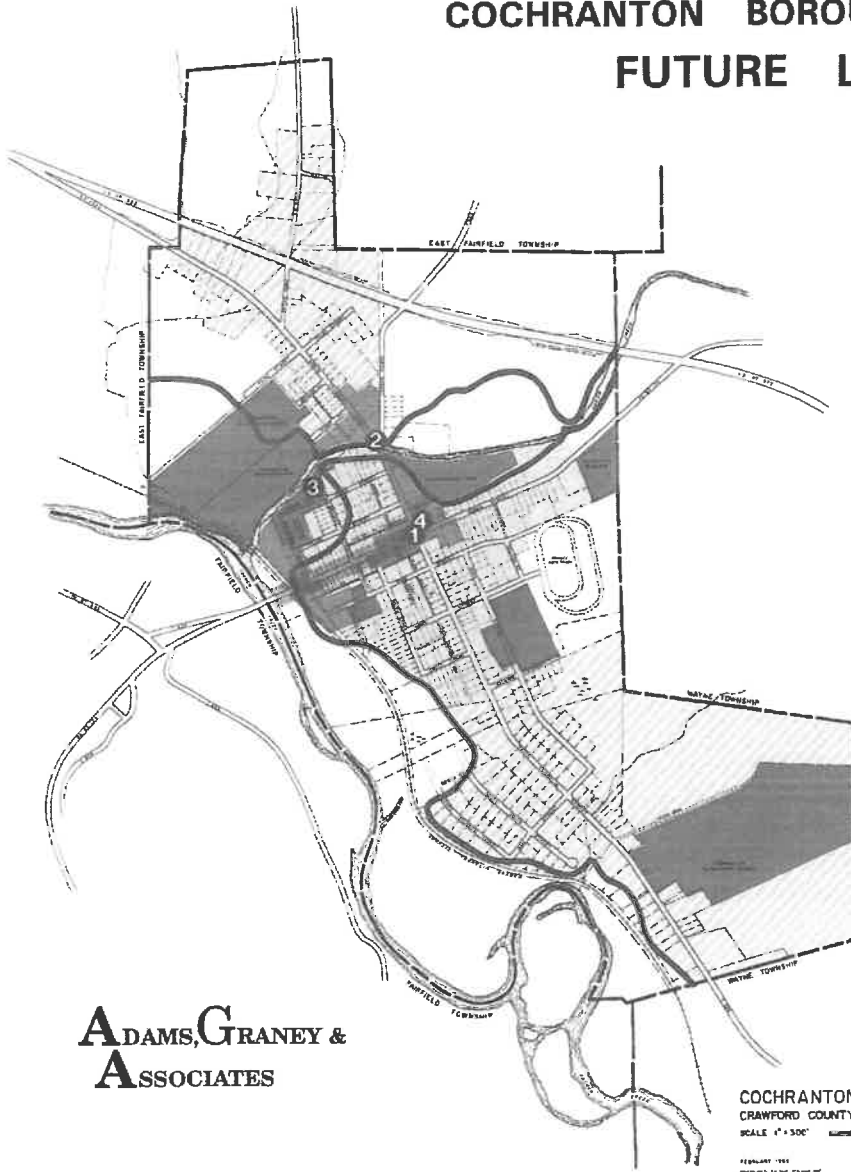
There are various options that could be taken; however, they are beyond the scope of this study. It is, therefore, suggested that at a first step, the Borough request that PennDOT send a traffic engineer to the Borough to offer one or more suggestion on how this problem could be overcome. If PennDOT's assistance is not forthcoming, then a private engineer should be retained to develop specific suggestions on how the problem can be resolved and the approximate cost of same.

Ideally, there should be at least two suggestions. The first for a short-term solution; merely to provide minimal safety to the residents of Cochranon. The second, a permanent solution. With these solutions and preliminary budget estimates, the Borough is in a strong position to request assistance from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

Because of the probable size of such an undertaking, there is no doubt that the formal 12-Year Plan approach must be used.

CAN THIS
BE DONE

COCHRANTON BOROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP



LEGEND

- RESIDENTIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- AGRICULTURE/OPEN
- APPROX. FLOODPLAIN BOUNDARY

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

- NEW TRAFFIC LIGHT
- IMPROVE VISIBILITY
- RAILROAD DEPOT
- BOROUGH BUILDING
- ROAD WIDENING

**ADAMS, GRANEY &
ASSOCIATES**

COCHRANTON BOROUGH
CRAWFORD COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
SCALE 1" = 500'

DESIGNED BY: [unreadable]
DRAWN BY: [unreadable]
CHECKED BY: [unreadable]

THIS MAP WAS FINANCED, IN PART, FROM THE SMALL COMMUNITIES PLANNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FUNDED BY THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS.